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## SIN IN ORIGEN'S *HOMILIES ON LEVITICUS*

The presentation of sin in Origen's homilies has not so far been a subject of separate study. The emphasis was placed on the issues related to penance, which were analysed from the western perspective, i.e. to what extent Origen gives evidence of the practice of canonical penance in the 3rd century Church. That trend dominates, for instance, in the excellent work by J. Danielou, which was first published in 1948<sup>1</sup>. H. Crouzel, the author of a monograph published over 35 years later, in 1985, applies the same perspective while discussing penance<sup>2</sup>. In recent years the perspective has begun to change, yet penance still remains the focus of interest<sup>3</sup>. As for the issues related to sin, the research justifiably concentrates on the first sin, or sin committed in pre-existence. After all, "this teaching is one of the most controversial elements of Origen's doctrine"<sup>4</sup>.

However, aside from Origen's views on penance or the first fall, his homiletic teaching on human sin in this life also proves interesting. The Homilies on Leviticus have been selected as the source text. Leviticus sets out regulations governing the Old Testament offerings, a large part of which are related to cleansing and expiation<sup>5</sup>. In a series of his homilies, Origen pays particular attention to the questions of sin and cleansing from sin. Following his way of interpretation, he assumes that the regulations had a literal meaning until the death of Jesus on the cross<sup>6</sup>, but he does not dwell extensively on that level. He is interested in the spiritual reading of Leviticus so as to elicit the message relating to sin and cleansing from sin which takes place in the Church. As we are dealing with homilies, not commentaries, Origen's purpose is to "build up the Church"<sup>7</sup>, i.e. to provide listeners and readers with advice on the truths of faith and the principles of Christian life, among which the issue of sin and cleansing plays a vital role<sup>8</sup>. This paper aims

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<sup>1</sup> J. Danielou, *Origène*, Paris 1948.

<sup>2</sup> H. Crouzel, *Origène*, Paris–Namur 1985.

<sup>3</sup> E. g. A. Monaci, *Sacrificio e perdono dei peccati in Origene*, "Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi" 19 (2002), p. 43–58.

<sup>4</sup> M. Szram, *Nauka o grzechu Adama w Komentarzu do Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian Orygenes*, [w:] *Grzech pierworodny*, red. H. Pietras, Kraków 1999, p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> Lev 4–5; 6,17–7,6; 11–16.

<sup>6</sup> LevHom 3,5, p. 309, Pages accordig to: *Homiliae in Leviticum*, ed. W.A. Baehrens, *Origenes Werke*, vol. 6, *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 29. Leipzig: Teubner, 1920.

<sup>7</sup> LevHom 1,1, p. 281.

<sup>8</sup> More on the specificity of Origen's homiletics: E. Staniula, *Homiletyczna działalność*

to present the thought of Origen on sin and its consequences as presented in the *Homilies on Leviticus*.

There are noticeable differences between the text of *Leviticus* used by Origen and the text acknowledged today: they often directly relate to the commented passages. However, we are interested in Origen's moral and spiritual teaching rather than the issues of exegesis; thus, the whole question of the text used by Origen is not taken into consideration in this paper. The thought of Origen revolves around the same motifs in a number of works. References to the other texts are not included here, as that would overburden the paper already rich in footnotes.

An influence of stoicism on Origen's moral thought is commonly recognised. In the discussed *homilies* certain stoic motifs are also noticeable, particularly in the description of the structure of man. Similarly to other stoics, Origen ascribes the leading role to the mind, which results in a moral model representing some stoic influences. However, the question to what extent the stoic ideal of perfection influences Origen's anthropology and the resulting moral teaching has not been dealt with in this paper.

## 1. Origen's Anthropology in the *Homilies*

Origen's anthropology has been the subject of numerous studies and is fairly well-known. One of its best descriptions can be found in the monograph by H. Crouzel<sup>9</sup>, who points to St Paul as its main source (1 Thes 5.23). Thus, in man there is *pneuma*, i.e. *spiritus*, which translates as the spirit. The spirit is, in fact, a divine element in man, corresponding to the Hebrew *ruah*. It bears no responsibility for human sin. However, sins have an effect on the *pneuma*, reducing it to the state of torpor. The spirit is the pedagogue of the mind, yet, it must not be identified with the Holy Spirit, even though it is a form of participation in Him. The *pneuma* dwells in every person, not only a baptised one, and does not leave a sinner, but remains dormant.

*Psyche* or *anima* – the soul – is another component, which contains a higher and a lower element. The former is called *nous*, *mens*, i.e. the mind. The soul is the seat of free will, it is made after the image and likeness of God, who is the Word, and it contains the participation in the image of God. It is equipped with divine senses, which are able to recognise God and His work. The lower element of the soul was added to it after the primitive fall: it corresponds to the soul's standing temptation to turn aside from the spirit and yield to the attraction of the body.

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Orygenes, [w:] Orygenes, *Homilie o księdze Jeremiasza. Homilie o Księgach Samuela i Księgach Królewskich*, Warszawa 1983, p. 5–20.

<sup>9</sup> Translation referred to in this paper: H. Crouzel, *Orygenes*, tłum. J. Margański, Bydgoszcz 1996, p. 131–135.

However, in the Homilies, Origen does not give a full account of his anthropology, instead, he focuses on two elements: the mind and the soul<sup>10</sup>. Comparing Origen's vocabulary in the Homilies with the terminology given by Crouzel, one can easily notice that the mind and the soul correspond to the higher and the lower element of the soul. It is precisely the mind and the soul that are capable of committing sin. The spirit dwelling in man, the *pneuma*, is not dealt with in Origen's homilies, which is understandable, as the author is interested in moral issues, and the *pneuma* does not sin<sup>11</sup>. However, the term of "the spirit" and the related "inner man" appear in the Homilies precisely in the meaning given by Crouzel<sup>12</sup>. It is, thus, necessary to present the mind and the soul as described in the Homilies, and the specific character of the sins of the mind and the soul demonstrated by Origen.

A spiritual commentary on the text of Leviticus concerning the deposit and partaking (Lev 6,1–5; 5,21–24) may help understand the anthropology applied by Origen in the Homilies. The deposit means all we have received from God: it includes both our body and soul, but also something greater, the image and likeness of God printed in our souls (cf. 2 Pet 1.4). The latter part of the deposit – the image of God – can be considered as identical with the spirit, the highest element of humanity. The soul is obliged to keep and return that image intact. We have also received another great deposit, namely Christ Himself and the Holy Spirit. Though Origen does not state it explicitly, that may mean the gifts related to baptism, as opposed to the image of God, which is granted to everyone. In any case, the homily is aimed at those who were baptized, and the deposit applies to them. We are free to make use of that deposit, as if Christ and the Spirit were at our disposal, especially when we are tempted to commit sin – we must not swear that we have no deposit, which means we must not deny the gift of baptism. Last but not least, there is the deposit of our rational mind: memory, prudence and every thought<sup>13</sup>. Thus, all that makes up humanity is described as a deposit given by God. Thus, there is a confirmation of the teaching that man was wholly created by God, followed by a statement that man has all the above-described gifts at his disposal. There is no reference to the fall in pre-existence and entering the body as a result.

"Partaking" is another term Origen dwells upon. It is an explication of the former concept, the deposit. It is no longer the question of individual gifts, but of God Himself. It means communion with the Father, the Son and the Spirit which

<sup>10</sup> On the basis of the Greek passages which have survived, one may assume that Origen uses the terms *logos* and *psyche*,

<sup>11</sup> It may be one of the reasons for the phenomenon noted by Crouzel (p. 132). The distinction *pneuma* – *nous* was quickly forgotten, even among Origen's disciples. They usually used the two terms interchangeably (e.g. Didymos the Blind).

<sup>12</sup> LevHom 2,2, p. 292: The soul is presented as a being which commits sins, while the spirit is sinless. Here, the spirit is identified with man. It is a good example of Origen's subtle dialectics: he uses the same term – "man" – in several meanings. Thus, in one place man is identified with the spirit that does not sin, earlier on he is presented as the one who gains the victory over sin and unites his mind with the Word of God, while several times the word is used in its ordinary, colloquial meaning. Also, see below: the chapter on sins of the mind.

<sup>13</sup> LevHom 4,3, p. 318.

has been granted to us. Though it is not made explicit, here again, one may point to baptism as the moment of granting this communion, which is, obviously, broken by sin. The communion with the Father, the Son and the Spirit also implies communion with saints, both on this earth and in heaven. Sin breaks both aspects of communion<sup>14</sup>.

Thus, for homiletic purposes, Origen presents the situation of a Christian as the one who has received everything he is from God, rather than as a fallen creature, separated from God and dressed in a "burdensome body"<sup>15</sup> as a result of the original fall. What is more, a Christian has also received the gift of communion with the Holy Trinity.

## 2. The Sources of Sin

In the homilies discussed in this paper, Origen devotes much attention to the description of sin and its impact on man, however, he does not dwell on the causes of such a situation, i.e. he does not refer to his theory of the original fall, apart from a few mentions. Being in line with of the nature of homilies, Origen focuses on the attitude of man, on how he can and should fight against sin in this life. In his deliberations, he always refers to the role of the devil, Satan, as the one who fights for man, attracts him to evil, wants to possess him. Several times he mentions the reasons for that fight. He writes, for example, that the devil admires the beauty of the human soul, and unable to take her as a bride, as Christ does, he wants to possess her as a whore<sup>16</sup>. Origen describes the devil as the "enemy", a fight against that "enemy" being one of the recurring motifs in the Homilies. However, we are not going to analyse Origen's demonology<sup>17</sup>, but his description of the interior of man, and sin as a reality in man. Here, the fight against temptation and sin is rarely identified with the struggle against the body or carnality. The motif, obviously, appears, as it is derived from the Bible, but it is not emphasised by Origen.

In the Homilies we sometimes see a division made between the good and the bad, the just and the sinners. However, Origen stresses that it is not a real division between people as, on this earth, everyone has to fight against sin<sup>18</sup>. In the same way, when writing about avoiding sinners, he does not mean keeping away from certain people regarded as sinners<sup>19</sup> or places regarded as sinful. Origen explicitly says that what matters is not avoiding the market place or even the theatre, but maintaining the purity of thoughts, heart and manners<sup>20</sup>. To sum it up, Origen does

<sup>14</sup> LevHom 4,4, p. 319.

<sup>15</sup> E. g. *De principiis* 1,7,5.

<sup>16</sup> LevHom 12, 7, p. 465.

<sup>17</sup> More on the subject – see: H. Pietras, *Szatan a początek świata materialnego w koncepcji Orygenesza*, [in:] *Demonologia Ojców Kościoła*, red. H. Pietras, Kraków 2000, p. 55–66.

<sup>18</sup> LevHom 9,4, p. 422.

<sup>19</sup> LevHom 3,3, p. 303–306.

<sup>20</sup> LevHom 12,4, p. 462.

not think that a detailed discussion of the genesis of sin is essential for the purpose of moral teaching.

### 3. The Mind and Sins of the Mind

To the concept of the “priest”, the key concept in Leviticus, Origen gives a number of mutually overlapping spiritual interpretations. Thus, man’s mind is the priest in him<sup>21</sup>, every man can be a priest as long as he lives a godly life and fulfills the duties towards his own soul<sup>22</sup>, and, above all, Jesus Christ incarnated is the only high priest, while assuming the robe of the high priest means precisely Christ’s incarnation<sup>23</sup>. Many times, while discussing passages on priesthood and priests, Origen alludes to the priests of the Church. Spiritual interpretations of the concept run throughout all the Homilies. Interpretations of the “sin of the priest” appear with similar frequency and in relation to all the above-mentioned meanings of the “priest”.

One has to return once again to the earlier-discussed anthropological terminology used in Origen’s Homilies. Here, the “priest” corresponds closely to the “man”. Beside the division between the “mind” and the “soul”, which is basic for the Homilies, another one appears – between the “man” and the “soul”. The “man” means, among others, one who lives in accordance with the intellect. The name of “man” becomes those who have not committed sin, who carry within them the image of God. He is identified with the “spirit”, the divine, sinless element in man, in contrast to the soul, which is capable of sin. His offerings are simply made of deeds worthy of God<sup>24</sup>. In another place, Origen directly identifies the above-discussed concept with that of the “inner man”, who is the one that sees God with his mind and has been made in His image<sup>25</sup>. For Origen, the concept of the “inner man” signifies a spiritual being which has been created by God and has not been contaminated by sin. Yet, in the Homilies discussed here, that concept and the concept of “man” assume a moral sense, meaning the part of human nature which does not sin, but withers as a result of sin<sup>26</sup> and quickens when one lives according to the Gospel. It may also mean a man who lives on this earth, but in a perfect way<sup>27</sup>. It must, however, be borne in mind that, at the same time, Origen is certain no-one living here is able to live without any sin<sup>28</sup>. Thus, whenever he writes about man

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<sup>21</sup> LevHom 1,5, p. 287. Also the “head of the tribe” may, according to Origen, symbolise the mind (lat. *sensus*). The conclusions are the same as in the case of the priest standing for the mind.

<sup>22</sup> LevHom 4,4, p. 320.

<sup>23</sup> LevHom 9,2, p. 418.

<sup>24</sup> LevHom 2,2, p. 290.

<sup>25</sup> LevHom 14,3, p. 484.

<sup>26</sup> LevHom 3,7, p. 311.

<sup>27</sup> E. g. LevHom 12,2, p. 455.

<sup>28</sup> LevHom 2,3, p. 293.

and perfection, it never refers to absolute sinlessness here on earth<sup>29</sup>. Apart from that, the term "man" is also used in the Homilies in its colloquial sense<sup>30</sup>.

Origen, above all, stresses that when Leviticus speaks about the sin of a priest, it never admits a possibility of ignorant sin, as it does in the case of other people. Ignorance can never fall on someone who has been placed high so as to teach others<sup>31</sup>.

The first interpretation identifying the "priest" with man's mind will be of primary importance for this paper. If the priest means man's mind, the sin of the priest has to be understood as the "sin of the mind". Moral conclusions to be drawn from such an interpretation are obvious: human mind is capable of sin, and those sins are the heaviest, without any mitigating factors, such as ignorance. Sins of the mind consist in going astray, putting aside godliness and God's teaching<sup>32</sup>, professing a false faith. Heresy, an understanding of faith in discord with the teaching of the Church, also belongs to the sins of the mind and is considered as serious<sup>33</sup>.

Sin of the priest causes the blame to fall on the whole people (Lev 4.3). Thus, sin of the mind contaminates the whole man: we are incapable of good deeds when our mind has turned to the evil<sup>34</sup>. If all sins begin from the mind, a man who is incapable of using his intellectual powers is also incapable of sin. Origen formulates those two conclusions while commenting on the description of different types of leprosy. Leprosy of the head means a refusal to follow Christ, thus, turning away from the true faith. The consequence of that is delusion of the soul, which, as a result, is unable to perform any good deeds<sup>35</sup>. Another type of leprosy is interpreted as a disease of the mind – insanity. Here Origen explicitly states that people suffering from it are free from any sin as they do not understand their behaviour and their actions<sup>36</sup>.

Of course, Origen also uses an interpretation of the word "priest" pointing to the priests of the Church. In that context, he always calls priests to a saintly life<sup>37</sup>. A priest also sins when he hides the law of God from his people, failing to provide adequate teaching<sup>38</sup>.

Since a priest also means Christ, Origen asks whether one can discuss the sin of Christ and the fact that Christ, as a priest, may have become a cause of sin of his people. Further he asks if, considering Christ committed no sin, one may say that He offered a sacrifice for sin. To formulate an answer, Origen quotes 1 Pet 2.22;

<sup>29</sup> An outstanding example is provided by Origen's deliberation on the sins of the saints described in the Scriptures, LevHom 15,3, p. 490.

<sup>30</sup> More on the "inner man" – see: E. S t a n u ł a, *Człowiek wewnętrzny*, [in:] O r y g e n e s, *Komentarz do Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian*, Warszawa 1994, p. 23–38.

<sup>31</sup> See: LevHom 2,1, p. 289; LevHom 3,1, p. 300.

<sup>32</sup> LevHom 2,4, p. 294–295.

<sup>33</sup> LevHom 8,11, p. 414.

<sup>34</sup> LevHom 2,4, p. 295.

<sup>35</sup> LevHom 8,9, p. 406.

<sup>36</sup> LevHom 8,6, p. 405.

<sup>37</sup> E. g. LevHom 1,5, p. 287.

<sup>38</sup> LevHom 3,2, p. 303.

2 Cor 5.71; Phil 2.7. One may, indeed, say that Christ became sin because, through His incarnation, he gave people a possibility either to believe in Him or not. It can, thus, be said that He caused the sin of unbelief in those who did not believe<sup>39</sup>.

#### 4. The Soul and Sins of the Soul

In the Homilies, Origen makes a contrast between the mind and the soul – a lower, sensual element in man. The latter cannot offer everything as it is incapable of full discernment. At the same time, in the Homilies it is presented not only as an element of the human structure, but also as a symbol of a certain way of life. Just as the “mind” symbolises a perfect life totally devoted to God, the offerings made by the soul, finest flour mixed with olive oil, signify an ordinary life devoted to worldly jobs, such as farming or seafaring<sup>40</sup>.

The soul is not capable of producing the seed of the word, only of receiving it; it is symbolised by a woman in the Scriptures<sup>41</sup>. Thus, it is dependent on the mind, playing the role of its servant. The soul is not made to be self-reliant; it always turns in one or another direction. Thus, it will either choose life, ie. Christ, and become immortal, or it will choose death and carry death within. Origen stresses, however, that he does not mean the “substantial” death which is final and definitive, but the death caused by moving away from God who is life<sup>42</sup>.

The ability of the soul to move in one or another direction is also described as good or bad intoxication. Bad intoxication is an image of lustfulness, greed and indecent desires. Good intoxication (cf. Ps 23 (22).5), on the other hand, stands for holy desires<sup>43</sup>. Thus, the soul is a centre of desires, lusts, passions and emotions. Sins of the soul mean that those desires have been given the wrong direction, towards death rather than Christ.

On the one hand, the soul depends on the mind: sins of the mind preclude it from performing good deeds. On the other hand, however, irrespective of the mind, the soul is itself a centre of desires which it can handle by either clinging to Christ or not. Origen treats the soul as an independent agent capable of sin, and he describes the sins of the soul which are independent of those of the mind.

Unlike the mind, the soul may sin unconsciously<sup>44</sup>. While the sins of the mind are presented as error, abandoning the truth, sins of the soul are often depicted as disease<sup>45</sup>. That disease makes the whole man “small”<sup>46</sup>. Thus, the passages of Leviticus dealing with diseases provide Origen with a starting point for his reflec-

<sup>39</sup> LevHom 3,1, p. 300–301.

<sup>40</sup> LevHom 2,2, p. 291.

<sup>41</sup> LevHom 8,9, p. 406.

<sup>42</sup> LevHom 9,10, p. 438.

<sup>43</sup> LevHom 7,1, p. 372.

<sup>44</sup> LevHom 2,1, p. 289.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>46</sup> LevHom 12,2, p. 455.



tion on the diseases of the soul. The description of six types of leprosy in Leviticus 13 is the longest of those passages. Even though Origen sometimes points to leprosy as a disease of the mind (leprosy giving bright-coloured spots meaning insanity, and leprosy of the head which stands for following false teachings), the six types of leprosy symbolise six types of stains which appear on the soul as a result of sin<sup>47</sup>.

What matters is a differentiation of the sins of the soul according to their weight. Among them are those which stay with us in the life to come, because they have taken such a hold of the soul that they cannot be removed. Others can be cleansed here. Yet, as wounds leave scars on the body, sins of the soul, even if cleansed, leave their mark on it – weaknesses of the soul which are an effect of sin. Those weaknesses also need attention from the shepherds. However, God is the only doctor who has the power to heal them. Origen explicitly refers to God the Doctor or Christ the Doctor. Among the sins of the soul, he then mentions impure desires and thoughts. This type of sin can be easily recognised as it leaves particularly persistent and visible scars, which make the soul lowly and fallen. Leprosy which looks like a burn symbolises all kinds of lust: bodily love, the desire for human glory, wrath or violence. Finally, leprosy on the bald head signifies a return of the soul to sin after it has been cleansed. Such a return contaminates the soul even more than the preceding act of sin.

The terms “body” and “bodily” appear in the Homilies several times as synonyms of mundane aspirations and evil inclinations, which is in line with their meaning used by St Paul<sup>48</sup>. However, they do not dominate: Origen prefers to simply write about sin, or the activity of the devil who leads the soul to temptation. Unlike the mind and the soul, the body is never presented as an independent agent capable of sin.

## 5. Other classifications of sin

Apart from the most obvious division between the sins of the mind and those of the soul, Origen frequently mentions other categories of sin. He usually distinguishes between two categories: heavier and lighter sins.

One of the most important distinctions is that between sins against man and sins against God. As usual, it is difficult to find a precise and coherent presentation of that distinction; however, it obviously plays a significant role for Origen. Sin against God relates directly to God and means blasphemy, turning away from God. It is similar to the sin of the mind and, indeed, it is often identified with it; it is classified as the sin of the head<sup>49</sup>. Sin against God is much heavier than that against man. The former leads to death, not the death of the body, of course, but

<sup>47</sup> LevHom 8,5, p. 400.

<sup>48</sup> E. g. LevHom 3,4, p. 307.

<sup>49</sup> LevHom 8,10, p. 407.

the death which is much worse: future punishment of eternal fire<sup>50</sup>. It means that blasphemy against God cannot be taken away by any suffering or bodily death, it remains in man even after his death. Then man is subject to eternal torture<sup>51</sup> as the sin has to be removed by eternal fire<sup>52</sup>.

That brings us to another distinction: that between sins pardonable in this life and unpardonable sins. The division is not identical with the one discussed above, as Origen mentions various categories also in relation to the sins of the soul: there are those that have taken too firm a hold of the soul and stay with us in the life to come<sup>53</sup>. In another passage, Origen makes a distinction between “desecration” and “abandonment” without any reference to sin against God. Desecration means a lighter sin which is not unto death, abandonment is a “sin to death” (1 Jn 5.16)<sup>54</sup>. It seems that the term is identical with a similar one: that of “mortal sin”, which causes the death of the soul. Until it is made clean by full atonement, Jesus will not be able to enter it<sup>55</sup>.

Origen also introduces a distinction between sin and offence. He notes, however, that sometimes those terms are interchangeable in the Scriptures, and sometimes there is a difference in their meaning<sup>56</sup>.

Still another distinction is that between the sin which requires Church penance and the sin which requires none. Origen lists the former: impiety and murder, he also stresses that penance is to be performed once<sup>57</sup>.

It has to be noted that the above-discussed distinctions do not provide a coherent system. Origen seems to be aware of his own inconsistency and limitations, however, he does not attempt to systematise his thoughts. In his homiletic preaching on sin, he tries to follow the way of teaching applied in the Scriptures. While commenting the Bible, he points to a number of overlapping meanings, especially in the spiritual dimension. Similarly, he does not aspire to certainty in his moral teaching, he maintains some interchangeability of the terms he uses, and he formulates opinions which can be understood in a number of ways. His style of moral teaching is fundamentally different from that of the Latin Fathers, e.g. Cyprian, who was his contemporary.

## 6. The Effects of Sin

As a fundamental consequence of sin, man is separated from God: the communion with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is broken. Through baptism, we

<sup>50</sup> LevHom 11,3, p. 454: futura nos poena maneat ignis aeterni.

<sup>51</sup> Aeterna supplicia.

<sup>52</sup> LevHom 14,4, p. 478: peccatum manet illis aeternis ignibus extingendum.

<sup>53</sup> LevHom 8,5, p. 400.

<sup>54</sup> LevHom 12, 6, p. 465.

<sup>55</sup> LevHom 12,3 p. 459–460.

<sup>56</sup> LevHom 5,4, p. 341.

<sup>57</sup> LevHom 15,2, p. 489.

participate in the nature of God; through the deeds of darkness, we deny our communion with the light<sup>58</sup>. Origen does not present that breakdown of communion as an act of God, e.g. a punishment inflicted on the sinner, but as an inevitable consequence of sin: sin is evil and impurity, therefore it cannot enter a communion with the Pure and Holy One. When the communion is broken, man loses the gift of the Holy Spirit and God's sonship<sup>59</sup>. By breaking the communion, the sinner "rejects the image of God and assumes the image of the devil"<sup>60</sup>.

Sin and the breakdown of communion with God also results in being expelled from the community of the saints: it takes place, first of all, in the spiritual dimension<sup>61</sup>, while excommunication from the Church is only an external sign<sup>62</sup>. Sin also causes destruction in man. The image of sin as a disease can also be applied to describe the effects of sin. Sin makes the soul wretched and small, it dwarfs the whole man<sup>63</sup>, numbing the senses of the inner man<sup>64</sup>. Origen often refers to sin as the death of the soul, not "substantial" death, but death as separation from Christ<sup>65</sup>.

Most consequences of sin arising in this life are not treated as God's punishment. What is more, Origen juxtaposes the punishments provided by the Old Testament to the practices of the New Testament, where bishops have no power to administer corporal punishments<sup>66</sup>. However, cleansing from sin which will take place after death is treated as a punishment involving great suffering, a punishment which should be feared: that of eternal fire<sup>67</sup>.

## 7. Sin in Pre-existence

In the Homilies discussed in this paper, Origen rarely tackles the issue of sin before birth<sup>68</sup>. However, the subject appears in the context of baptism of small children, which Origen considers as necessary to cleanse the sin related to birth in the body<sup>69</sup>. Leviticus 21.10–15 is devoted to the sanctity of the High Priest. Origen refers that passage to Jesus Christ incarnated, stating that everyone has been stained by the very fact of being placed in their mother's womb and taking on their bodily nature from their father's seed. Jesus is the only one to enter humankind pure and unstained<sup>70</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> LevHom 4,4, p. 319.

<sup>59</sup> LevHom 8,11, p. 417.

<sup>60</sup> LevHom 4,3 p. 318.

<sup>61</sup> LevHom 8,10, p. 408.

<sup>62</sup> LevHom 15,2, p. 489.

<sup>63</sup> LevHom 12,2, p. 456.

<sup>64</sup> LevHom 3,7, p. 312.

<sup>65</sup> LevHom 12,3, p. 459–460; LevHom 9,10, p. 438.

<sup>66</sup> LevHom 11,2 p. 451.

<sup>67</sup> LevHom 11,3, p. 454, also see above: sins unpardonable in this life.

<sup>68</sup> And, as mentioned early, it is one of the most important and most widely analyzed aspects of Origen's theology.

<sup>69</sup> LevHom 8,3–4, p. 399.

<sup>70</sup> LevHom 12,4, p. 460.

Such marginal treatment of the issue probably results from the very nature of homilies, which are meant to provide Christians with moral teaching. Apparently, Origen does not consider sin in pre-existence as relevant for Christian morality. It is worth noting, however, as the problem of the origin and nature of evil and sin plays a significant role in his reflection as a whole<sup>71</sup>.

## 8. Summary

In his Homilies, Origen focuses on two elements in man, which he defines as the mind and the soul. They are identical with the two elements of the soul described in his other works: the higher – rational – and the lower one. Both the mind and the soul are capable of sin. In general, Origen does not mention the sin of the body. Sins of the mind are heavier, causing the whole man to sin and precluding the soul from any good deeds. They consist in error, turning away from God, heresy and ungodliness. The soul is also capable of sin as an independent agent. Sins of the soul can be unconscious; they consist in yielding to the temptation of wrong desires and passions. They are often presented as diseases. Origen makes several distinctions between two categories of sins: heavier and lighter ones. The most important of those distinctions is that between the sins which can be pardoned in this life and unpardonable ones. Apart from that, there are distinctions between sins against God and sins against man, as well as between those which require canonical penance and those which do not. The above-mentioned distinctions are not made in a consistent way, some categories overlap. Breaking the communion with God and, thus, with the community of the saints is the most serious consequence of sin. Others include the dwarfing of man and the disease of the soul. They are not presented as God's punishment. However, after death sins are cleansed by the punishment of eternal fire. Origen does not devote much attention to sin committed in pre-existence.

## GRZECH W ORYGENESA HOMILIACH DO KSIĘGI KAPŁAŃSKIEJ

### S t r e s z c z e n i e

W homiliach Orygenes koncentruje się na dwóch elementach człowieka, które określa zwykle jako rozum i dusza. Są one tożsame opisywanymi przez niego w innych dziełach dwiema częściami duszy: wyższą – rozumną i niższą. Zarówno rozum, jak i dusza mogą grzeszyć. Orygenes nie mówi w zasadzie o grzechach ciała. Grzechy rozumu są cięższe,

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<sup>71</sup> See: J. M. Szymusiak, *Orygenes*, [in:] *Drogi Zbawienia*, red. B. Przybylski, Poznań 1970, p. 312–314.

bo powodują grzech całego człowieka, uniemożliwiają duszy spełnianie dobrych czynów. Polegają one na zbłądzeniu, odejściu od Boga, herezji, bezbożności. Dusza także może samodzielnie popełniać grzechy. Jej grzechy mogą być mimowolne, polegają na uleganiu pokusom złych pragnień i namiętności. Często grzechy duszy są przedstawiane jako choroby. Orygenes dokonuje kilku podziałów grzechów na dwie kategorie: cięższe i lżejsze. Najważniejszy z tych podziałów to grzechy odpuszczalne w tym życiu i nieodpuszczalne w tym życiu. Oprócz tego są wyróżnione grzechy przeciw Bogu i przeciw ludziom oraz grzechy, które wymagają pokuty kanonicznej i inne. Te podziały nie są konsekwentne i poszczególne kategorie grzechów mieszają się. Najpoważniejszym skutkiem grzechu jest zerwanie wspólnoty z Bogiem, a w efekcie i ze wspólnotą świętych. Kolejnym zaś jest karłowacenie człowieka i choroba duszy. Nie są one przedstawiane jako kara Boża. Natomiast oczyszczenie po śmierci jest już karą ognia wiecznego. Orygenes bardzo mało uwagi poświęca grzechowi w preegzystencji.